

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRESSIONAL PENSION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 22, 2007

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this very important issue. As you know, my constituents have been directly impacted by the very issue we are voting on today. The previous Congressman from my great Congressional district, Randy Cunningham, used this Chamber and his position to line his pockets with bribe money from lobbyists. He violated the trust of his constituents and his colleagues with his behavior, tarnishing this institution. Unfortunately, the taxpayers will be forced to pay a sizeable pension to him every year.

I think this legislation is an important first step in denying pensions to Members of Congress who abuse the trust of the people. However, I want to note that this legislation did not go far enough.

First, it has a 2-year implementation window, which would allow any Member convicted over the next two years to maintain their pension. I think this is the wrong message to send. If it was constitutional, I would support retroactively taking away the pensions of convicted felons such as Dan Rostenkowski and Randy Cunningham.

Additionally, I think H.R. 476 does not go far enough in detailing the types of crimes that would trigger these provisions. That is why I am a strong supporter and cosponsor of H.R. 14, sponsored by Congressman MARK KIRK. His legislation, the Congressional Integrity Act, would deny a Congressional pension to any Member convicted, and denied a final appeal, for a much more expansive number of crimes directly related to the official duties of a Member of Congress.

This legislation is long overdue. I was proud to support a similar measure, H.R. 4011, in the 104th Congress along with many of my Democratic and Republican colleagues, including current Speaker NANCY PELOSI and our former Speaker DENNIS HASTERT.

I call on Speaker PELOSI to widen the scope of this legislation to help us regain the trust of the American people and withhold the pensions of those who violated that trust.

Furthermore, I call on Speaker PELOSI to consider important legislation to develop stricter, more transparent regulations on pork-barrel spending, also known as "airdropped" earmarking. I was proud to introduce legislation that would ban the practice of slipping earmarks into Conference reports that have not been approved by either the House or the Senate previously. These items do not have the benefit of being debated in Committee or on the floor of the House of Representatives. By requiring the Conference Committees to only consider items that were passed by one of the Chambers; we can ensure that all

projects were examined in the light of day, not the backrooms of Congress.

I ask for consideration of this important provision.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR CURT ANDRE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Honorable Curt Andre for his many years of service and leadership to the City of Turlock and greater Central Valley. Mayor Andre has served as the Mayor of Turlock for an unprecedented seventeen years and as the Chairman of Turlock's Planning Commission for the previous eight years.

Mayor Andre was born and raised in Turlock and—after earning a degree in optometry from the University of California at Berkeley—he returned to Turlock to start his profession. Mayor Andre has since served as the President of Statesmen of Stanislaus, the President of Turlock's Active 20–30 Club, a member of the United States Conference of Mayors, and a member of the California State University Advisory Board.

In addition to these roles, Mayor Andre has served as the Chairman of the Turlock Planning Commission and Mayor of Turlock for a total of twenty-nine. Overseeing the growth of a town from roughly 30,000 to over 70,000, Mayor Andre has been a much needed element of consistency in Turlock's time of transition.

For his commitment to a better quality of life in Turlock, Mayor Andre has received the Paul Harris Award, the Distinguished Public Service Award from Rotary District 5220, the 2004 Citizen of the Year Award from the Turlock Chamber of Commerce, and the 2006 Outstanding Community Leader from the California State University at Stanislaus.

Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Mayor Andre for his many years of service and dedication to the residents of Turlock. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing him many years of continued happiness and success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, on January 22, 2007, due to flight delays, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 43, 44, 45, and 46. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall No. 43, yea; rollcall No. 44, yea; rollcall No. 45, yea; rollcall No. 46, yea.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 22, 2007

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to join my colleagues in the House of Representatives in unanimously passing H. Res. 51 honoring the contributions of America's Catholic Schools.

As a product of Catholic schools, I know first-hand the value of a Catholic education. Through grade school, high school, college, and law school, my Catholic schooling not only prepared me for academic success, but also taught me to serve my community by sharing my Catholic values. Thus, it is no surprise that a Catholic education also played a critical role in the intellectual and spiritual growth of my own children as well.

Today, America's Catholic schools are widely recognized among the best academic institutions in the country. From pre-schools to graduate schools, Catholic intuitions prepare nearly 2.4 million young men and women for meaningful lives rooted in spirituality, respect for others, and a sense of social responsibility.

It gives me great confidence to know that America's Catholic schools are preparing a new generation equipped with the knowledge and values to serve our communities and to meet the many challenges present in our world. On behalf of myself and my family, I want to commend the thousands of dedicated servants that make Catholic education a foundation for a better today and tomorrow.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to rise today to recognize Minnesota Public Radio's 40 years of broadcasting excellence.

Minnesota Public Radio—or simply "MPR"—as it is known to its many members and fans—began humbly on January 22nd, 1967, as a small radio station at Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. Thanks to the extraordinary vision and dogged determination of then-recent graduate Bill Kling (now MPR President) and future college president Father Colman Barry, that little college radio station has grown into a 37-station network that serves nearly 800,000 every day with its programming for radio, Internet and in-person audiences. Nationally, MPR reaches more than 14 million people through original programs produced by American Public Media.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.